

Alma and Small Craft Stop

#28 Significance of Small Craft

Join us as we celebrate the boats on display at Hyde St. Pier in: Boats of the Bay: a Splash of Local Color

The historic boats of the San Francisco Bay Area were as diverse and colorful as the people who lived and worked here. Boat and sail shapes from maritime traditions all over the world have graced these waters. When you look at the Park's bright blue and yellow felucca *Nuovo Mondo*, it's as if you are suddenly transported to the sunny, turquoise waters of the Coast of Italy. The *Nuovo Mondo* is indeed a very Mediterranean boat, with her triangular, lateen sail rig, and her beamy, double-ended shape. The Park's shrimp junk, *Grace Quan*, on the other hand, hails from the other side of the world! She is every bit a Southern Chinese boat, with her deep red black hull, and her brown, fan-like battened sail. Imagine a bay where scores of these two dramatic and beautiful sails daily shared the golden Bay horizon in their immigrant owners quest for fish!

Even after the days of sail were replaced by the age of motors, the working boats of San Francisco Bay were built with a unique flair and beauty. The Park's Monterey boat, the *Wetton*, was built 1923 by Dominic Labruzzo, and her graceful, sweeping shape is very much in the Italian tradition. Labruzzo's shop was just one block away along Fisherman's Wharf. Now that's local, and that's Italian!

Another famous San Francisco local yocal is the Park's tugboat *Telco*. She was built in 1939 just across the Golden Gate in the town of Sausalito and worked for over fifty years for Pacific Bell Telephone company, helping to lay and repair Bay's network of underwater phone cables. The *Telco* is one of last small wooden tugs on the coast – as salty old timer from Sausalito —her strength still comes in handy in waterborne work around the Aquatic Park Lagoon.

Not all of life is about work, though, and neither are boats! Sailing has long been a favorite local sport, and the Park maintains a number of the Bay Area's best-loved racing yachts from the 1930s. The *Merry Bear* is the most famous of these: small, swift and strong, she impressed enough sailors to inspire the construction of 68 more just like her over the next few decades, making her easily the most popular local yacht of her day! Her simple beauty adds to the colorful, unique parade of San Francisco Bay's historic boats! Ready About!